

Please amend claims 1, 8, and 12-14, and add new claims 16-21 as follows.

1. (Amended) An electrical connector, comprising:

a housing;

a plurality of surface mount contacts; and

areas of reduced rigidity in the housing located at positions generally furthest from

a neutral point of the connector.

8. (Amended) A housing for an electrical connector, comprising:

a frame; and

areas of reduced rigidity in the frame located at positions generally furthest from a

neutral point of the connector.

12. (Amended) A method of reducing rigidity in a housing of an electrical connector, comprising:

determining a [neutral point of the connector] location on said housing which may

build up stress; and

removing a portion of the housing at [a position relative to the neutral point] said

location.

13. (Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein [the position] said location is generally furthest from [the] a neutral point of the connector.

14. (Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein [the position] said location is located to absorb stress and accommodate warp.

Please add the following new claims 16-21.

16. (Newly Added) The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein the housing is rectangular and the areas of reduced rigidity are located at the corners of the rectangular housing.

17. (Newly Added) The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein the areas of reduced rigidity are located in the peripheral wall of the housing.

18. (Newly Added) The electrical connector according to claim 17, wherein the areas of reduced rigidity are located at the distal end of the peripheral wall of the housing.

19. (Newly Added) The housing according to claim 8, wherein the frame is rectangular and the areas of reduced rigidity are located at the corners of the rectangular frame.